



**A CANADIAN
CHRISTMAS
TENORS BUILDING ON
SUCCESS** {page 12}

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BLUE-LINER TO PLAY
FOR GERMANY** {page 21}



**SCARY
LADY GAGA'S
CLOSE CALL
DISH** {page 13}



HALIFAX

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Thursday, December 23, 2010
www.metronews.ca



News worth sharing.

Repatriation. Procession



► The hearse carrying the casket of Cpl. Steve Martin of the 3rd Battalion Royal 22e Regiment drives past dozens of people paying their respects outside CFB Trenton, Ont., yesterday, following a repatriation ceremony for the fallen Canadian soldier.

PETER REDMAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fallen soldier welcomed home

Cpl. Steve Martin was killed on Saturday by an improvised explosive device while he was on foot patrol. He was the 154th Canadian soldier to die as part of the Afghan mission.

From deficit to surplus

Finance minister delivers good news, bad news {page 3}

You're down to the wire

Last-minute gift ideas for you procrastinators {pages 17-20}

No snow, no dough: Mayor

► As of yesterday, 959 fines have been issued since winter-parking ban began on Dec. 15 ► About 200 vehicles were cited on first night of ticketing

Mayor Peter Kelly called out HRM's Traffic Authority yesterday, asking it to ease up on issuing winter-parking-ban tickets during the holiday season — weather permitting.

"I felt that if there's a way to use some degree of discretion, if there is no snow on the ground, then that discretion should be used," Kelly said yesterday. "If it's not impeding traffic ... then it's questionable as to the real need to give out tickets."

Kelly said growing frustration and concern from citizens led to his releasing a mid-afternoon press release calling for this type of discretion to be used.

"I don't want it to be perceived that this is a tax grab," said Kelly, adding there has been more than \$47,000 worth of tickets issued since the ban went into effect last week. "It's clearly bringing a concern to the public, and clearly a concern when there's no snow on the ground."

Coun. Sue Uteck — who has also spoken out against the ban — took issue with the method Kelly used to get his message

Department responds

The HRM Traffic Authority won't be letting up on giving out tickets, according to a statement released last night.

- The statement mentioned the 2006-07 winter season, when an effort was made to limit the ban to nights when there was snow.
- "This proved unsuccessful because too many cars were left along the streets, forcing snow ploughs to work around them," the statement read.

out yesterday.

"You don't change public policy through a press release, and you didn't even consult council," she said.

Under the ban, those caught parked on the street between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m. face a \$50 ticket. It increases to \$82.90 if not paid within 60 days.

● ALY THOMSON

ELEVEN QUESTIONS WITH MAYOR KELLY, PAGE 4



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Vaccine tracking system sought

Developing an electronic information system to track vaccination distribution is a "critical priority" for Nova Scotia, a report found after assessing the province's experience with H1N1.

"Using an electronic system will allow us to synthesize data very quickly and make important decisions in a more timely manner," said Dr. Robert Strang, chief

Recommended

Other recommendations the report offered included developing a stronger plan for mass-immunization clinics to minimize wait times,

public health officer for Health Promotion and Protection.

Strang said he hopes a system will be implement-

incorporating alternate models of providing care, such as flu-assessment centres, and involving the provincial government in the process of approving pandemic vaccines.

ed over the next few years and could not speak to the cost.

"It's about having the right tools to guide public

health work on a day-to-day basis, as well as whenever the next emergency comes around," said Strang, adding the province does not know for certain how many Nova Scotians were vaccinated because at the time of the pandemic, there was no comprehensive system.

The report released yesterday by the Department of Health Promotion and

Protection summarized the province's experience with H1N1 in 2009-10.

A better relationship and communication between public and primary health are among the "lessons learned."

The study also said the province needs to expand on the use of social media during a pandemic to reach a younger demographic.

● ALY THOMSON

Projected deficit now a \$97M surplus: N.S.

► But finance minister warns there are more tough times to come

The Dexter government got a temporary reprieve from red ink-stained budget updates yesterday.

Finance Minister Graham Steele revealed that while the province originally forecasted a \$222-million operating deficit for 2010-11, the updated forecast is predicting a \$97.2-million surplus.

Steele explained the \$319-million variance was partially due to a series of unforeseen one-time factors, including increased revenues from Nova Scotia's share of personal income tax (\$71.5 million), prior-year adjustments (\$97.6 million), and the bump in HST revenues resulting from July's two-percentage-point hike (\$29.7 million).

The province is still projecting a \$370-million deficit for 2011-12, however. That's partially due to university funding, which will return to annual reporting in this spring's

Baillie reacts

Conservative Leader Jamie Baillie says he thinks the government should be working to balance the books in 2011.

► "It's good that we're coming this close to surplus ... (but) the right thing for the government to do now is go on with the job of actually getting us to a true surplus," he said in response to the fiscal update.

budget.

"Although we are making genuine progress, Nova Scotia has not yet turned the corner when it comes to the underlying structural deficit," Steele told reporters. Steele also noted every government department, except for Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, is currently under budget for the year. ● ALEX BOUTILIER



► Graham Steele talks to reporters yesterday after delivering his fiscal update.

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO



Insults, giggling, and a whiff of pot smoke among 2010 airport security complaints. Scan code for story.

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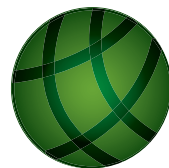
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- HRM's mayor sits down with Metro to talk politics, stadiums and councillors' ties
- He looks forward to taking a break at Christmas before the levees on New Year's Day
- In 2011, Kelly's tenure will reach 11 years and he'll tie Ron Wallace for longest-serving Halifax mayor



TEXT JENNIFER TAPLIN PHOTOS RYAN TAPLIN



1 What would you say was the biggest HRM issue of 2010?
I think the restarting of the Harbour Solutions programs is one of those issues that come to the forefront as to achievements for this year.

2 What will be the biggest HRM issue in 2011?
Of course we have the discussion over the convention (centre) complex. We're waiting to hear back from the federal government to see if they're going to fund that.

3 How would you characterize the cohesiveness (or lack of) of council?
For the most part, I think council has been fairly focused. From time to time things go sideways, and that takes away from the real discussion, but for the most part I think we've moved ahead quite a bit.

Higher calling?
While tempted by provincial and federal politics, Mayor Peter Kelly said he's focusing on the next municipal election in 2012.

► "Right now it's there, and that's my intent," he said. He said he's been asked several times to run in provincial and federal elections and turned those opportunities down. "One never says never, but the fact is right now I'm focused on 2012."

► Next year will mark the

4 How likely do you think it will be that HRM will have a smaller council in 2011?
I think there's an understating that we need to reduce the size of council and I think that's an inevitable outcome.

5 Anything you regret about the Harbour Solutions problems?
We didn't take the right approach in keeping the public well informed

11th year as mayor for Kelly. Sometimes politicians stay on too long, but Kelly said as long as he's doing a good job for his constituents, it makes sense to stay on.

► "If the public believe you are meeting their needs and expectations, then that's an element of that piece. If you're missing those pieces and you're not serving as they would expect you to serve, then I would expect there would be some kind of response to that."

as to what's going on, the progress and other issues. We've learned a lot, and that's one piece you can never forget: you cannot ever communicate too much.

6 What are your Christmas plans? New Year's?
For Christmas I will be visiting family and friends. Unfortunately, I've not had the time to be able to do so, so I'm looking forward to having the time to rekindle relation-

ships. New Year's (Eve) I'll be here for the event in Grand Parade ... and on New Year's Day we're hosting a levee here at 9 a.m. I think I'll be going to levees most of the day.

7 Do you ever feel you're spread too thin in trying to make it to all these events?

When you're putting in 70 to 90 hours a week, you feel that you're thinly spread and it's challenging to get to what you can, but there's always more that you can't even get to. I only scratch a fraction of the things I'm asked to go to and I find that the most challenging part of the job.

8 Will Halifax get going on a stadium in 2011?
We understand there's some appetite from the federal government and we've had some preliminary discussions with the private sector, where there's a desire to see where this is going to go ... We want to make sure it's a concerted

effort. We can't go on our own; we have to make sure we work with all the stakeholders. So are we getting a stadium? My hope is this is one we will be able to bring to fruition. It doesn't have to be an elaborate stadium, and it can be different from the one envisioned with the Commonwealth Games bid, but it's a major piece of sport infrastructure we don't have.

9 Will there be enough money to go around, in light of the new library and the convention centre?

The library has been funded through the land ... and the funds have been allocated. The funds from the convention centre have been allocated from the dollars derived from the overall project, so that will be self-sustaining.

10 What do you think of people who refer to you as a fence-sitter, that you won't go out and immediately take a stand on an issue?
For politicians it's strange

"(Coun. Jerry Blumenthal) shows emotions in his ties, and every emotion one could think of certainly comes out in his ties. Some people wear their emotions on their sleeve; he wears his on his ties."

MAYOR PETER KELLY

to be criticized for what politicians should really do, which is listen to the public. Politicians don't have all the answers, and if we're going to look at where the public is on any particular issue, we have to listen.

11 Who would you say is the news-maker of 2010?
I think it would be the premier. In his first year he's had many challenges. Some people think he's done them right, and other's think he's done them not so right.

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Hey, it's actually cool to protect your noggin

► Wearing helmets 'more of a social norm than people realize' researcher says ► 75% of those studied wore one



ALY THOMSON
HALIFAX@METRONEWS.CA

Peter Dorey has endured some major wipeouts.

"It was pretty icy and the way I slipped I went backwards and wacked my head," said Dorey about an incident at Ski Martock more than five years ago.

"I woke up to a man standing over me. I was knocked unconscious and had a pretty bad concussion. Luckily I had a helmet on."

Dorey is part of the 75 per cent of Nova Scotia's skiers and snowboarders who are strapping on a helmet before hitting the hill, a QEll neurosurgery study has found.

Lynne Fenert, the research nurse who con-



► A snowboarder in action

ducted the study, found 80 per cent of women and 70 per cent of men are protecting their heads.

The study, which was based on the frequency and factors associated with helmet use, revealed the number 1 reason people choose not to wear a

4-12

The age range with the highest rates of helmet use is age four to 12.

helmet was "social image."

She said others simply believe they won't get hurt.

"No one ever sees themselves in those shoes," adding the majority of these skiers and boarders are teenagers.

Fenert said the study will be published in early 2011 and a campaign will be launched to target non-wearers.

The study was based on the observations of 3,336 skiers and snowboarders at Nova Scotia's three ski hills.

Nova Scotia cabinet increase in the future?

Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter says he is considering increasing the size of his 12-member cabinet early in the new year.

In a year-end interview with The Canadian Press, Dexter says 18 months into power he's learned the current cabinet is small and has a heavy workload.

The premier says he's looking at ways to lighten responsibilities for some ministers and that could include the addition of one or two members to the cabinet.

The New Democrats reduced the size of cabinet from 18 to the current 12 shortly after taking power in 2009.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

\$850K

The government said it could save about \$850,000 by paring down the cabinet and the number of executive assistants.

News in brief

Councillor to have surgery



► Linda Mosher

Purcell's Cove-Armdale Coun. Linda Mosher is getting back surgery for Christmas.

The councillor announced yesterday she will be on leave after her surgery on Dec. 23rd to recover.

"My back surgery will require me to be away from council for an extended period of time," Mosher said. "I ask for the understanding of District 17 residents during my recovery period."

● METRO

Man faces child porn charges

A Halifax man is facing a charge of child pornography after a search by po-

lice yesterday morning.

Police searched a residence on Hunter Street at 6 a.m. and seized computer equipment.

Leroy Butler, 62, was charged with possessing child porn and will appear in court in February.

● METRO

Bridges spread Christmas cheer

Bridge users will enjoy free travel across the Mackay and MacDonald bridges on Christmas Day.

Steve Snider, general manager of Halifax Harbour Bridges, said this has been a holiday tradition since 1983.

He said traffic volumes are low on Christmas day so it allows more of his staff to be home with their families. ● METRO

\$10K in jewelry taken in heist

About \$10,000 in jewelry was stolen from a residence in Cole Harbour Tuesday evening.

A suspect entered a residence on Colby Drive through a bedroom window and rummaged through several rooms of the house. ● METRO

Provinces win right to regulate in-vitro fertilization

► Justice Thomas Cromwell offers determining view in split vote ► Says many provisions fall under provinces

A divided Supreme Court of Canada has upheld the right of the provinces to regulate in-vitro fertilization. But the court said the federal government is within its rights in banning cloning and human hybrids.

The court issued a divided advisory opinion that grappled with the "weighty moral concerns" of assisted reproduction. It upheld in part a 2008 Quebec Court of Appeal decision that declared Ottawa overstepped itself in asserting its right to regulate the use of human sperm, eggs and embryos.

The court split 4-4-1 with Justice Thomas Cromwell

Power imbalance

Four other judges upheld the right of the provinces to regulate health care.

Justices Louis Lebel and Marie Deschamps wrote that although assisted human reproduction "raises moral and ethical questions," an overriding federal criminal law was not justified.

offering the determining view in what amounted to a complex analysis of the time-honoured constitutional rights of provinces to

control health care.

Quebec filed a constitutional challenge to the 2004 federal Assisted Human Reproduction Act and was supported by three other provinces. The province argued that Ottawa was treading on provincial jurisdiction over health care.

The act regulated the use of sperm, eggs and embryos, while banning clones and hybrids. Ottawa maintained it had the right to make criminal laws and that the purpose of the act was to protect the "health, safety and public morals" of Canadians. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Christmas. Miracle



► In a photo taken earlier this month, Tracy Hermanstorfer watches as Coltyn offers dad Mike Hermanstorfer a bite of a french fry at their home in Colorado Springs, Colo.

ED ANDRIEWSKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Happy to be alive, one year later

Tracy Hermanstorfer, now 34, went into cardiac arrest while preparing to give birth to Coltyn at Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs on Dec. 24, 2009. Doctors quickly delivered Coltyn by emergency Cesarean section, but he appeared lifeless. Mike Hermanstorfer, who was at his wife's side when her heart stopped beating, thought he had lost both her and their newborn son. But doctors revived Coltyn as Hermanstorfer cradled him in his arms, and about 45 minutes later, a nurse told him his wife's pulse had inexplicably returned.

Mayor had alliance: WikiLeaks

A U.S. diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks says the mayor of Kingston, Jamaica, has acknowledged forging an alliance of convenience with an alleged drug baron to reduce crime in the sprawling slums. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Potential pardon stirs outrage



Scan code for story, or visit metronews.ca

Family loses home in fire

A family in Brantford, Ont., has lost their home and their puppies in a fire. Brant County firefighters were on the scene for more than 12 hours as the blaze roared through a farmhouse overnight. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Border drills raise Korea tensions

► Massive exercise will involve 800 troops ► 33 kilometres south of border

South Korea vowed yesterday to "completely punish" North Korea if it attacks again, and mobilized hundreds of troops, tanks and helicopters for a massive military exercise prompted by high tensions on the peninsula.

The firing drills planned for today near the Koreans' heavily armed land border signalled that South Korea is willing to risk further escalating tensions with North Korea, which shelled a southern island off the western coast on Nov. 23 and stirred up a war-like atmosphere.

The attack, which killed four people, was portrayed by Pyongyang as a retaliation for southern military exercises on Yeonpyeong

island that day.

South Korea has conducted 47 similar military drills this year, and it scheduled one more exercise for Thursday in response to the North Korean attack, an army officer said on condition of anonymity, citing department rules. Thursday's drill will be the biggest-ever wintertime joint firing exercise that South Korea's army and air force have staged, an army statement said.

"We will completely punish the enemy if it provokes us again like the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island," Brig. Gen. Ju Eun-sik, chief of the army's 1st armoured brigade, said separately.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Big snow. U.S. west



► Cross country skiers in Crested Butte, Colo., yesterday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/NATHAN BILLOW

There's more coming

The U.S. National Weather Service has posted a winter storm warning for areas in Utah and the western mountains of Colorado. Flood warnings are also posted in Southern California from the same storm that reached from Hawaii to Colorado earlier this week.

Heathrow boss forfeits bonus

Heathrow's boss announced yesterday he would give up his hefty bonus this year after the world's busiest international airport was crippled by snowy conditions. Air and train travel throughout Europe finally began to return to normal.

Temperatures have picked up in Britain and about 70 per cent of Heathrow's planned departures — some 900 flights — were expected to operate yesterday. Air-

lines are trying to clear a backlog of cancelled flights, after iced-over runways and planes triggered days of chaos and misery for those seeking to travel elsewhere for Christmas.

Eurostar, which offers train services between England, France and Belgium, said routes were operating a near-normal schedule. Still it urged on-ly customers with tickets to show up at terminals.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police don't waffle on charges

A 31-year-old man charged with mischief after throwing waffles on the ice at a Toronto Maple Leafs game says he did it out of frustration at the underperforming team.

"I'm just a normal Leafs fan and love them to death," Joseph Robb of Oakville, Ont., said yesterday.

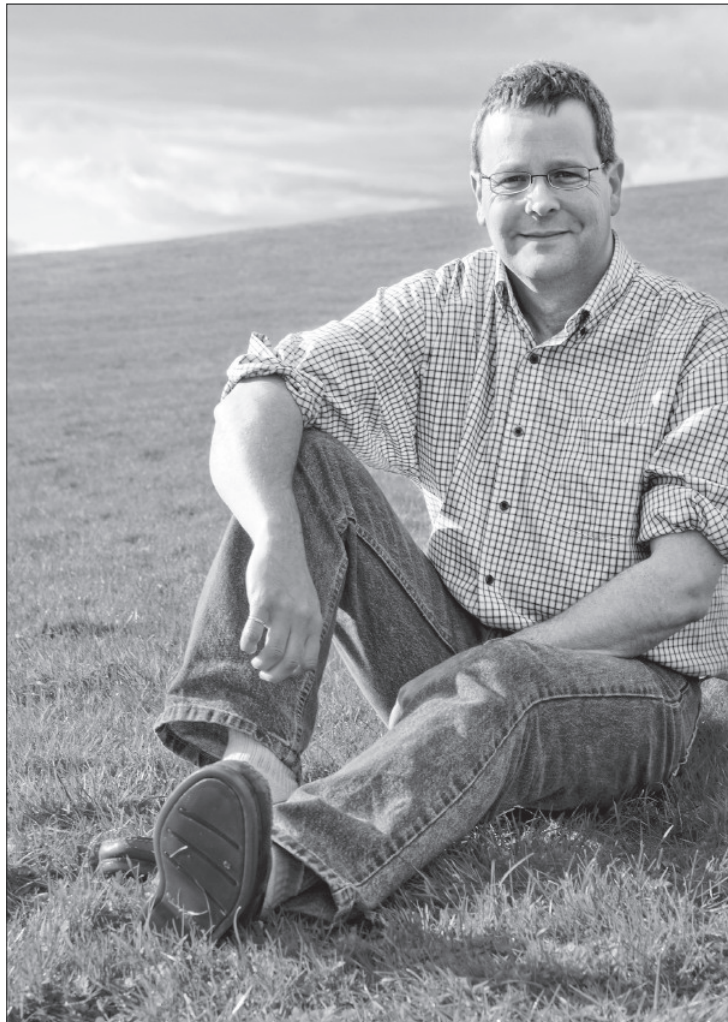
28 Toronto currently stands 28th in the 30-team league with a 12-17-4 record. The Leafs were trailing 5-1 at the time of the waffle toss.

day in an interview.

His love affair will be from a distance, however, after being barred from the Air Canada Centre.

Further punishment could follow from a January court appearance.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Economy faces risks

► Canada's economy will grow by about 2.3% next year: IMF report

The risks to Canada's economic recovery are increasing and could curtail growth in the future, the International Monetary Fund warns in a new outlook for the country.

Overall, the fund's end-of-the-year report on Canada gives a generally positive assessment, especially in comparison to other countries.

But it cited several "key risks" that could restrain

the recovery and growth in employment, including an overheated housing market, high household debt and the weak recovery in the U.S.

"Risks are elevated and tilted to the downside with high household debt levels the main domestic risk, and a weaker U.S. outlook the largest external risk," the report states.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Magnate. Corporate compromise







► Magna's Frank Stronach speaks in Markham in this May photo. The battle between Magna International founder Frank Stronach and minority shareholders of MI Developments Inc. has ended in a truce that will give him ownership of several racetracks in exchange for control of the company, according to a report.

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stronach settles with shareholders

It was reported that MI Developments' minority shareholders will take control of Magna International and its real estate.

Market moment

TSX	Dollar	Oil	Natural gas 1,000 cu ft
			
+ 15.55 (13,380.70)	+ 0.32¢ (98.60¢ US)	+ 66¢ US (\$90.48 US)	\$4.152 (+ 9.3¢) Gold contracts \$1,387.40 (- \$1.40)

WORTHEN/BLACK BOX REPORT

Are your final wishes on this list?

New Years Resolutions

- ☒ Spend time with kids
- ☒ Exercise more
- ☐ Pre plan my funeral
- ☒ Update my will.

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WHAT'S A TRADITION WITHOUT TRADITION?

He says ...

JOHN MAZEROLLE



It's that special time of year when columnists write irritating clichés like "it's that special time of year."

I'm contributing to the ritual this year because it's become clear I don't have enough annual traditions.

I've fought against repeating myself my whole life: When the bartender knows what I want, it's time for a new drink. When I'm starting to enjoy a job, it's time to move. When it seems I've settled on a toothpaste, it's time to brush around. (Keep it under your cap, but Crest and Colgate don't even know about each other.)

This approach gives me the benefit of feeling like my life is tumultuous even when it's stagnant — the life equivalent of

splashing in the bathtub.

I do have a few traditions, but nothing reassuring: I bang my hip on the corner of the kitchen table with the precision and regularity of the Queen's Guard. I watch the Boston Bruins lose in the playoffs, like clockwork, every spring. And every time I'm in my hometown my best friend and I go to a major fast food chain and order the "special" burger of the moment. I eat it first and describe in detail just how horrible it is, then he eats it and agrees.

You see why I would want some more heartwarming (not heart-burning) traditions.

My Christmases are not consistent, except that they keep getting worse. This year it's my only day off, with five days of work on one side and six on the other. Ho ho ho.

"This approach gives me the benefit of feeling like my life is tumultuous even when it's stagnant ..."

And I grew up with all the traditions: Warm house; stockings; presents; food; family; mother yelling. "Why can't we have a nice Christmas?!" and running off to cry. (That happened twice, which makes it

tradition.)

I need some of that again. So here are a few Yuletide rituals I'm considering:

- Join the Christians who complain that the words "Happy

Holidays" are an assault on their faith, rather than an attempt to include other faiths. I'm not Christian, but it's fun to be the underdog, especially when you number two billion.

- Recreate the big family Christmas. Set up a huge table with 12 place settings, all the trimmings, decorations, and a children's table off to the side. Then sit at it alone in contemplative silence.

- End the annual Christmas column with irritating clichés like, "Best of the season to you and yours" and "Merry Christmas."

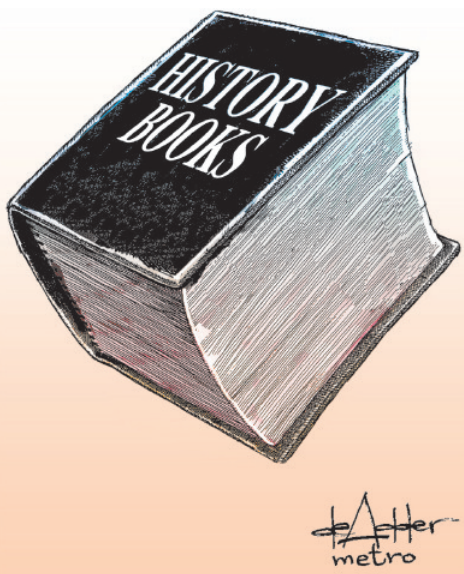
Oh, and best of the season to you and yours. Merry Christmas!



Read more of John Mazerolle's columns at metronews.ca/hesays

Cartoon

THE ONLY JUSTIFIABLE PLACE FOR A "DON'T ASK DON'T TELL" POLICY:



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Certainly not child's play

Worth mentioning

It came with wobbly writing and hand-drawn diagrams, but an elementary school science project has made it into a peer-reviewed journal from Britain's prestigious Royal Society.

Biology Letters published a report yesterday conducted and written by a group of eight- to 10-year-olds from an English elementary school investigating the way bumblebees see colours and patterns.

The scientific organization said the children reported findings that were a "genuine advance" in the field of insect colour and pattern vision.

'Genuine advance'



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Working with a neuroscientist from University College London, the children carefully documented their methodology and discussed the data they collected.

The group trained bees to go to targets of different colours by giving them a sugar reward, and reported that the insects are able to learn and

remember cues based on colour and pattern. Scientists who commented on the kids' report in the journal say although the experiments were modest and lacked statistical analyses, they were cleverly and correctly designed and hold their own compared to those conducted by highly trained specialists. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

What was your favourite memory of 2010?

Email halifaxletters@metronews.ca
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Metro Minute at Cosmomania

Time is running out to see a very cool space adventure at the Discovery Centre on Barrington Street. The exhibit Cosmomania is in its final days, wrapping up Dec. 31.

The exhibit relives the past 50 years of space exploration, and what is expected in the next 50 years.

Highlights include ex-

plorations on the first human to travel to outer space, the first man to walk on the moon, and the first launch of the Airane rocket.

You will also get to experience the life of an astronaut on a future mission to Mars.

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MICHAEL R. BROWN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

► Check out Cosmomania at the Discovery Centre.

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2

scene

Scene in brief



Christian Bale will star in Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou's new project about 13 young prostitutes who help save compatriots from Japanese troops rampaging Nanjing, the latest film exploring a World War II-era atrocity that stirs nationalism in China. Bale, currently co-starring in the boxing drama *The Fighter*, will portray an American priest in the movie

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



CBS to bring 3 rookie series aboard for midseason: *Blue Bloods*, *Rules* get new slots



► The Canadian Tenors, from left, Fraser Walters, Clifton Murray, Victor Micallef and Remigio Pereira. With help from Oprah Winfrey, success-crammed 2010 was a 'Perfect Gift' for the popera quartet.

The ultimate bromance



- By late 2009 the Canadian Tenors had built a solid homegrown following
- Group's popularity skyrocketed after they appeared on the Oprah show

A year after releasing their first hit album, the Canadian Tenors are delivering *The Perfect Gift*, a compilation of traditional and contemporary holiday music.

"You have the classics like *O Holy Night* and *Silent Night*, but there are songs that are not necessarily Christmas-specific," explained tenor Victor Micallef. "Some great producers worked on that, as

well," added band mate Clifton Murray. *Hallelujah* was (produced by) Bob Ezrin, who worked on *The Wall*.

That's as in Pink Floyd's *The Wall* — just one of many aspects of The Tenors that may surprise. The quartet's clean-cut, all-North American looks scream "pre-fab," and, indeed, the band was the brainchild of Canadian composer Jill Ann

"We started grassroots and just slowly built up. We cut our teeth on the road doing that."

CANADIAN TENOR REMIGIO PEREIRA

Siemens, who first started work on the project some 10 years ago. The current configuration of the group is Victor Micallef, Clifton Murray, Remigio

Pereira and Fraser Walters.

The recent holiday album was released in October, months after the group's debut album *The Canadian Tenors* ranked at the top of Billboard's Classical Albums chart.

Before making inroads in the U.S., Pereira said, the group did 12 shows in 12 small towns in western Saskatchewan.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Joined at the hip

The Canadian Tenors spend more time together on the road than they do with their families these days.

► The four wrapped up their 2010 tour schedule Tuesday night in Fort Worth, Texas.

► They plan to head back north, to the singers' respective homes for the holidays.

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Lady Gaga stalker makes it backstage

► 24-year-old woman reportedly already known to Gaga's team

Lady Gaga got quite a scare in London when a stalker reportedly got backstage and nearly made it to the singer, according to Hollyscoop.

"Gaga was understandably shaken by the incident but was a consummate professional and continued as per normal, putting on a dazzling show," a source says of her show at the O2 arena.

The unidentified 24-year-old apparently made a fake backstage pass to get past security and was found heading for Gaga's dressing room.

She was questioned and released.

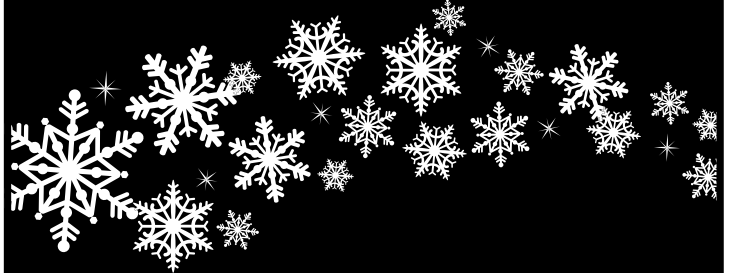
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► Lady Gaga

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Thank God that's over



As the year — and technically an entire decade depending on which math you use — draws to a close, it's only natural to reflect on the past. On the fashion front, 2010 presented

highs and lows.

You loved fashion's return to wearable clothes such as the Céline-fueled minimalist trend. But the invasion of jeggings? Not so much.

We polled readers in nine countries where we are published, to find out which trends you'd love to bury for good in the new year.

METRO WORLD NEWS

"I'm tired of heels so high and over-embellished that they should only be worn by drag queens."

A METRO READER



Ridiculously tall platforms heels

They may look great on the runway, in a music video or on a street style blog, but they're difficult to walk in and often hurt. Maybe that's why über tall shoes are overwhelmingly the least popular trend among Metro readers — except the Italian ones.

82%

of our readers in Italy love sky-high heels.



Trucker hats

Ages ago, Pharrell Williams made them cool. Then, Ashton Kutcher made them popular. Now, they're the accessory of choice for cheeseballs everywhere — still...



Goth style

Times are dark enough. Why dress that way too? Based on our survey results, you're ready to kill the goth look.



Harem pants

Fashionistas associate dhoti trousers with Givenchy couture. But most people just think of Hammer Time. Americans and Canadians have the least tolerance for drop crotch pants.



Crocs

Let's face it. The rainbow coloured rubber clogs only really make sense on very small children. The Dutch, surprisingly, hate them the most.

69%

of our Dutch readers would banish Crocs from the earth

46% OF OUR HUNGARIAN READERS THINK BALLET SLIPPER FLATS ARE TOTALLY LAST YEAR



Ballet slipper flats

A timeless classic or over-exposed bore? If you ask our Hungarian and Danish readers, the comfy shoes are the latter.



44%

OF OUR U.S. READERS THINK UGGs ARE VILE

Ugg boots

They bother us for a number of reasons. At the top of our list: the irritating sliding noise they make when you walk around in them.



Leggings, weggings and jeggings

The knit, wet look and denim variety drive our French and Hungarian readers batty.

Honourable mentions: 1. Jeans with bling 2. Ed Hardy "jerk shirts" 3. Sex and the City

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A resolution of decor

► New Year's resolution: To be the perfect decorator and have the perfect home

DECOR MOMENT



KARL LOHNES
HOME@
METRONEWS.CA

It's nearing the end of the year and my resolutions are piling up: Lose weight, eat healthy, live a stress-less life. But my biggest resolution is to complete all the small decorating projects that have been lingering since the renovation of my house last year.

Drapes in the dining room, a new faucet in the guest bathroom and a carpet runner for the upstairs hallway are just a few. Here's a list of other forgotten decor chores that could use some updating, all of which will make me a hip-ter decorator, I'm sure.

UPDATING MY LOOK

It's time to re-frame a few older pieces of art; the ones

with the 1970s frames are in desperate need of a facelift. A simple frame with a soft, metallic sheen (either silver or gold) can make any piece of art feel updated. I'm digging out the measuring tape, making sure that all my art is hung approximately 66 inches from the floor to the middle of the art. Lowering my artwork will actually make my ceilings look taller (great design trick) and give it new perspective.

BEING A WARMER PERSON

My dining room window desperately needs fabric and the master bedroom needs some warming up. I'm thinking of a lightweight plain wool fabric with a coloured ribbon sewn onto the inside edge and across the bottom.

Having my drapes lined in polar-fleece type fabric will give them a full body, block sun and provide great installation from the heat

and cold.

GETTING IN SHAPE

I have a beautiful dining table but it's not the right shape for the space I've allotted for dinner parties. My space is square, therefore I need a round or square-shaped table.

My fabulous oval table is overbearing in the square space and should find a new home in a longer, rectangular room. My ideal table would have a pedestal base. Corner legs tend to get in the way when squeezing extra guests at the table.

BECOMING HIP

It's time for an update ... My Barely There alabaster-coloured paint is washing itself out and my walls are crying for more umph! I'm thinking about giving into the trend of darker walls and a rich, warm grey will add drama and cool down



► Glass vases can add colour trends to a room

all the neutral taupe, brown and cream that I have collected in sofas, area rugs and wood furniture. Perhaps a few new pillows, lampshades and glass vases in colours like bright yellow or purple will help keep my living room on trend without a huge investment.

What is your decorating resolution for this year? Is it to add more personality to your space, to complete the furnishings or to add a new colour to the walls? I'd love to hear about your plans and projects so please send a photo of your decorating projects to home@metronews.ca.



► Flannel drapes add warmth to a room.

Greetings of the Season

It may be a winter wonderland outside, but our hearts are filled with warmth as we reminisce about the wonderful year we've had serving all of you.

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HOLIDAY HOURS

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CAPITAL HEALTH WISHES YOU A HEALTHY, HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON. To prepare for your health needs please note the following holiday service changes:

Most walk-in blood collection services will close at noon on Christmas Eve and re-open for regularly scheduled hours on December 29. Mt. Uniacke Blood Collection is closed between December 23 and January 3, and St. Margaret's Bay Blood Collection is closed between December 24 and January 3. All Blood Collection Clinics are closed on Monday, January 3.

Walk in X-ray services at all Capital Health hospitals, except Twin Oaks Memorial and Eastern Shore Memorial hospitals, will be closed from noon on December 24 through January 3. For hours at Twin Oaks and Eastern Shore, please call the hospitals directly.

Community Mental Health clinics will close at noon on December 24. They are open regular hours from December 29 to December 31, and closed on January 3.

If you have urgent blood collection, x-ray or mental health requirements, please contact your family doctor.

For more information on holiday hours, please visit www.cdha.nshealth.ca and click 'Holiday Hours'.

Capital Health reminds you to anticipate your health needs in advance of the holidays:

- Ensure your prescriptions are filled
- Do not over-exert yourself shoveling snow
- Enjoy holiday cheer in moderation
- If you have a chronic medical condition, anticipate your needs and have them taken care of in advance



Capital Health | www.cdha.nshealth.ca

Beef Tourtière



Ingredients:

- 500 g (1 lb) ground beef
- 250 g (1/2 lb) ground pork
- 175 ml (3/4 cup) chicken broth
- 1 each minced onion and minced garlic clove
- Celery stalk, diced
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) each dried thyme and sage
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) ground cloves and cinnamon
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) mashed potatoes
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) fresh parsley, minced
- 2 frozen pie shells (each 23 cm/9 inches), thawed

Beef Tourtière Preparation:

- 1 In a large, deep skillet over medium-high heat, pan-fry ground beef, ground pork, onion and garlic. Drain. Add chicken broth, celery, thyme, sage, cloves and cinnamon; cook for 10 minutes or until no liquid remains. Remove from heat. Stir in mashed potatoes and parsley.
- 2 Spoon into pie shell. Top with second pie crust and cut steam vents in top crust.
- 3 Bake in a 200 C (400 F) oven until hot and golden brown, 35 to 45 minutes. Makes 8 servings. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Want some peanut butter with that burger?

► There's a reason for the lunch lineup at this casual restaurant

LUNCH RUSH

VALERIE MANSOUR
FOOD@METRONEWS.CA

There's a lineup at Darrell's so my friend and I return a half hour later. This time we easily find a table in the bottom level of this casual, friendly restaurant.

Darrell's is famous for a lot of things on their large menu, so we decide to share a few items including a smooth and delicious chocolate milkshake.

I indulge in their Peanut Butter Burger which, while unusual, is a tasty creation

with a layer of peanut butter that sticks to the roof of your mouth, not to mention bacon, lettuce, tomato, cheddar and mayo. The homemade fries on the side are fat and spicy.

My friend's Pump-It-Up Wrap, while not as impressive as the burger, is loaded with Cajun grilled chicken, mozzarella, spinach, mushrooms, tomato, red cabbage, broccoli, cucumber and ranch dressing.

The corn chowder is rich, steaming hot and has great flavour.

No wonder there was a lineup.

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News worth sharing.

The season to sparkle



Top toys

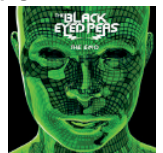
Find out what children around the world are hoping to see under their Christmas trees this year. {page 18}



Music for the masses

Great gifts for that music lover in your life.

{page 42}



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Top toys around the world

► What's the most popular gift for young ones, and the young-at-heart? ► We asked local retailers in 14 different countries. ► Some have real Buzz.



UNITED STATES, UNITED KINGDOM, SPAIN JET PACK BUZZ LIGHTYEAR

Why popular: Sorry Dad, he doesn't actually fly, but the jetpack makes whirring sounds, and the laser is movie-accurate. Plus: He says things from "Toy Story 3."
(SOURCE: TOYS R US; BRITAIN'S TOY RETAILERS ASSOCIATION; JUGUETERIA FANTASIA)



HOLLAND MINI-KITCHEN BY MIELE

Why popular: This toy oven has more features than your own, and plays music, too.
(SOURCE: BART SMIT)



SWEDEN, ITALY, FRANCE PAPER JAMZ ELECTRIC GUITAR

Why popular: Black Sabbath. Judas Priest. Lady Gaga. Kids can play anything on this paper-thin, battery-operated guitar.
(SOURCE: METRO SWEDEN; LITTLE BIG TOWN; GRAND PRIX DU JOUET)



CANADA BARBIE VIDEO GIRL WITH BUILT-IN VIDEO CAMERA

Why popular: You can record up to 30 minutes of movie, via a camera hidden in Barbie's chest. Very cool but a little creepy.
(SOURCE: CANADIAN TOY ASSOCIATION; ONE OF 108 HOT TOYS)



MEXICO DINO VALLEY TOY SETS

Why popular: Kids can act out "Jurassic Park" in the safety of their own home.
(SOURCE: MERCERIA DEL REFUGIO)



BRAZIL LIV DOLLS

Why popular: Barbie is a nerd compared to these fashionistas, who shop, skateboard and rock out after getting their nails done.
(SOURCE: RIHAPPY)



SOUTH AFRICA OREGON SMARTGLOBE

Why popular: Touch the pen to any country and you'll hear interesting facts, updatable online.
(SOURCE: REGGIE'S)



AUSTRALIA BEYBLADE METAL FUSION BATTLE TOP

Why popular: String a ripcord through the top and these discs spin around, knock one another off the table.
(SOURCE: TOYS R US AUSTRALIA)



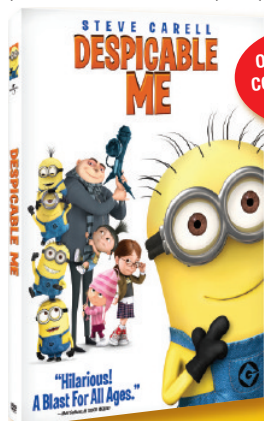
HONG KONG BANDAI BEN 10 LEGACY OMNITRIX

Why popular: The "Ben 10" anime series follows a kid who wears an Omnitrix, the ultimate weapon, on his wrist.
(SOURCE: TOYS R US HONG KONG)



RUSSIA WELLY DIE-CAST TOY CARS

Why popular: Do you have to ask? Everyone wants a Lamborghini.
(SOURCE: DETSKY MIR)



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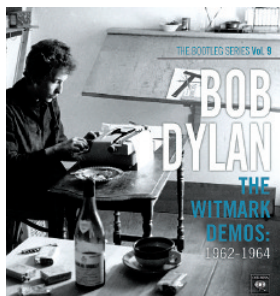


Music picks



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Journey
Revelation (2 CDs + 1 DVD)
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The thirteenth studio album from '80s rock giants Journey comes with a DVD of live performances and packs in a total of 24 songs.



Bob Dylan
1962-1964 Witmark Demos
\$18.99 at Amazon.ca
A two-CD collection of 47 stripped-down songs, 15 of which have never been released before by the legendary singer songwriter.

Black Eyed Peas
The E.N.D.
\$13.74 at Walmart
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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2010

Tipping point

► Tip postie, dog walker, hairdresser with vino

That's the suggestion of noted Canadian wine writer, speaker and judge Natalie MacLean, who is no slouch at choosing the right vino to fit the recipient's personality.

"I wanted to find a way to approach wine that is fun, takes the snobbery out of it and gives drinkers more confidence," she said in an interview.

"Once I had the notion about all those people who we tip, or unusual people who provide service all year around, 'I thought, let's say thank you with a bottle of wine.' MacLean says that wine "is a little different than a monetary tip or a gift like candles and soap, which I am sure everyone is tired of."

If a large bottle of wine seems daunting, most liquor stores and wine outlets have half-sized bottles of everything from red and white to sparkling wines which she suggests pairing with a corkscrew or wine book.

It's always wise to make sure the gift is something the recipient will appreciate and that the person isn't an abstainer for

religious or health reasons.

Here, from her recent blog, are several wine suggestions for those who serve you faithfully.

Hairdresser: For the person who combines humour and optimism, go for a light gulpable wine like a dry rosé.

Mail deliverer: Choose a winery that is consistent year after year in producing a tippable that can be enjoyed in snow, rain, sleet or hail. Try an Australian Shiraz or Argentine Malbec.

Personal trainer: Think a muscular, robust red would work? Hold that position. Instead, try Riesling as this light white wine pairs well with a health-nut diet of salad and seafood, plus it is low in alcohol.

Financial planner: Sticking to a long-term view, vintage port makes the perfect gift.

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Big German will represent at WJC

► Abeltshauser says his country will have to rely on hard work



MATTHEW WUEST
@METRONEWS.CA

Konrad Abeltshauser is hoping to help Germany show it belongs at the IIHF world junior championship.

The Halifax Mooseheads defenceman from Bad Tolz, Germany, will be a key player when his country, after a one-year hiatus, returns to the event's top division starting on Boxing Day in Buffalo and Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Germany was relegated to the second-division WJC last year.

"We have to try and stay in the A pool and I think we have a good chance," said Abeltshauser, who had four assists and a plus-9 rating in five games last year.

"The past couple of years we've been up and down, but now we have a good team and we want to stay there."

Germany is in a preliminary-round group with the United States, Finland, Switzerland and Slovakia. While the U.S. is the defending gold medalist and Finland often ices solid teams, Germany could contend for the third and final playoff spot along with Switzerland and Slovakia.

"Those are two teams we can beat if we play good," Abeltshauser said. "If we beat those two teams, we won't be in the relegation round."

The six-foot-four 196-pounder is optimistic because Germany's roster is loaded with returnees from

Frk on the fringe

Martin Frk remains with the Czech Republic's world junior team, with cuts still to come.

► The Mooseheads rookie sniper is the youngest player on the pre-tournament roster.

► He is tied for the Mooseheads scoring lead with 31 points in 34 games.

last year's second-division event. He could be one of as many as seven players from the Canadian Hockey League on the team, while many of the others have pro experience in Germany.

"All of our players have great character and they all work hard," Abeltshauser said. "We might not be as skilled but we always try to work harder than the other team."

Abeltshauser, an 18-year-old who was drafted in the sixth round (163rd overall) of the 2010 NHL draft by the San Jose Sharks, has logged plenty of ice time with the Mooseheads this season, recording three goals, 10 assists and a minus-16 rating in 32 games.

With Germany expected to employ a defensive game plan, a good tournament from Abeltshauser will help their cause.

"We try to keep the game as tight as possible, and sometimes you get a lucky bounce and win the game nobody expected you to win," he said.



► Konrad Abeltshauser will represent Germany at the world junior championship.

4

sports

Quoted



"I probably wouldn't have done it if it was a point shot that I banged home on the second or third rebound. Marcus made an unbelievable play. We came back to the bench and I don't know exactly what was going through my head at the time, just really wanted to show my appreciation for that play. I leaned over and laid one on the helmet there. That's going to haunt me for the rest of my career."

PORTERS LAKE NATIVE ANDREW GORDON, ON KISSING WASHINGTON CAPITALS TEAMMATE MARCUS JOHANSSON, WHO SET HIM UP FOR HIS FIRST CAREER NHL GOAL ON TUESDAY.



Scan for code for more sports

U.S. bringing experience to Buffalo

Forward Ryan Bourque is among eight returnees who will help the United States defend its world junior hockey championship on home soil later this month.

USA Hockey unveiled its 22-man roster yesterday.

The team includes eight players from the team that beat Canada 6-5 in overtime in last year's tournament final. The Americans

begin their title defence against Finland on Dec. 26 in Buffalo, N.Y.

Bourque, the son of Hall of Fame defenceman Ray Bourque, is a forward with the QMJHL's Quebec Remparts. Fellow returning players are goaltender Jack Campbell, defenceman John Ramage and forwards Jerry D'Amigo, Chris Kreider, Jeremy Morin, Kyle Palmieri and Jason Zucker.

The roster also includes several players from the gold medal-winning under-18 squad. They are Zucker, goalies Campbell and Andy Iles, and defencemen Justin Faulk, Derek Forbort and Jon Merrill.

The roster features 16 first- or second-round NHL draft picks, including nine first-round selections.

"I'm excited with this group of guys moving for-



► Chris Kreider

ward," head coach Keith Allain said in a statement. "We've got good speed and talent across the board,

which should help us in a tournament with so many skilled teams."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RICHARD WOLOWICZ/GETTY IMAGES

Bobcats hire Silas for interim

The Charlotte Bobcats have announced that Paul Silas will take over for Larry Brown on an interim basis as head coach.

Owner Michael Jordan announced Brown's departure in a release yesterday, a day after the Bobcats were outscored 31-12 in the fourth quarter in their fourth straight loss.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colts lose Collie

Indianapolis Colts receiver Austin Collie is done for the season after he suffered a concussion Sunday against Jacksonville.

Collie was placed on injured reserve yesterday. Collie leads all Indy receivers this season with eight touchdown catches, is second in receptions (58) and third in yards (649).

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- 4 Down With Webster - Whoa Is Me
- 3 Eminem ft Lil Wayne - No Love
- 2 Rihanna ft Drake - What's My Name
- 1 Bruno Mars - Grenade

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NHL demotion has silver lining

► Being sent back to the WHL lets Schenn play for Canada's juniors

Brayden Schenn played just more than eight minutes for the Los Angeles Kings in a 3-1 victory over the New Jersey Devils on Oct. 30, and then he sat, and sat, and sat.

For the better part of a month, the talented 19-year-old centre from Saskatoon was left idle, trying unsuccessfully not to think too much about his situation. With eight games under his belt, Schenn was approaching the 10-game threshold that would activate a year of his NHL contract and all but assure he wouldn't return to junior this season.

So he sat, contemplating the uncertainty. Would he stay in the NHL? Would he be sent back to the Brandon Wheat Kings of the Western Hockey League? Would he play again for Canada at the world junior hockey championship? He didn't have a clue about what was going to happen.

"I didn't get told anything," the baby-faced Schenn said in a recent interview. "Three weeks, up until I got sent to Manchester (of the American Hockey League on Nov. 17 for a conditioning stint), came back from Manchester and I didn't really get told anything. I'm sure they were unsure what they were going to do with me."

"They're calling the Americans the favourite, that's fine by us."

BRAYDEN SCHENN

"Everything is going through your head when you're not playing and you're sitting there in the hotel ... A lot goes through your mind."

Some closure finally came Dec. 3, two days after Schenn returned to the Kings from his two-week stint with the AHL Monarchs, when he was sent back to Brandon. Disappointed over the demotion, the silver lining was that he would be able to rejoin the national junior team and help try to avenge last January's loss in the gold-medal final to the Americans.

Still, it took the fifth-overall pick in the 2009 draft a while to get over the sting of being returned to the WHL and having to put off his NHL dream for another year.

"I'll agree with them, maybe it was the right decision. I guess I'll find out in the future," said Schenn. "You can't argue with L.A. there. They've produced a lot of good players, they hold my future and they're going to do what's best for me."

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► Brayden Schenn celebrates with goalie Olivier Roy on Tuesday.

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MLB

Drunk driver sentenced in Angel's death

A construction worker who was on probation for felony drunken driving when he ran a red light and killed rookie Los Angeles Angels pitcher Nick Adenhardt and two other people was sentenced yesterday to 51 years to life in prison.

A judge sentenced An-

drew Gallo, 24, amid sobbing from the victims' family and friends who earlier heard him apologize for the 2009 crash.

Prosecutors said Gallo's blood-alcohol level was nearly three times the legal limit when he blew through a red light at an Orange County, Calif., intersection on April 9, 2009, and T-boned the car carrying Adenhardt and three friends.

Also killed were Courtney Stewart, 20, and Henry Pearson, 25. A fourth passenger, Jon Wilhite, had his spine separated from his skull by the impact and survived.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

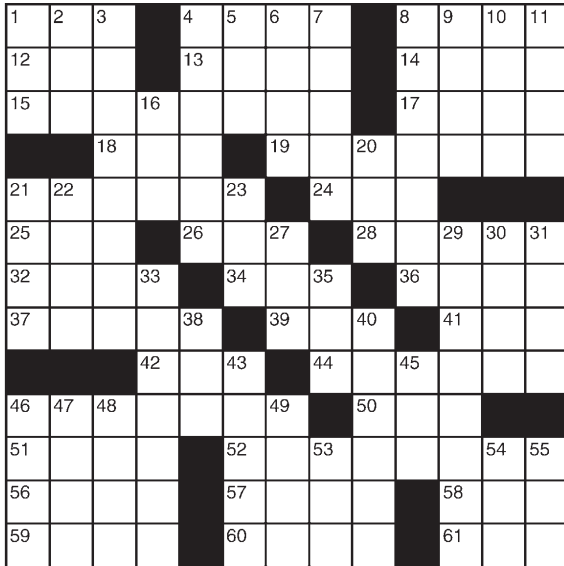
Crossword

Across

- 1 Jungfrau, for one
4 Docket entry
8 White spread
12 Vast expanse
13 Awestruck
14 Pinnacle
15 Fence for defense
17 Anatomical network
18 See 6-Down
19 Ache aid
21 Pluto, once
24 Historic boy king
25 Tease
26 Tear
28 Re Benedict XVI
32 Earthenware pot
34 Promptly
36 Tibetan monk
37 Commemorative pillar
39 Homer's interjection
41 Parcel of land
42 Winter ailment
44 Put the — on (stop)
46 Ocean motion
50 Toast topping
51 Curved moulding
52 One of Rome's seven hills
56 Evidenced a pinprick
57 Sweeping story
58 "Platoon" setting, for short
59 Missile shelter
60 Dweeb
61 Chances, for short

Down

- 1 Venomous viper
2 Meadow
3 Easily perceived
4 Friendly ghost
5 — Khan



- 6 With 18-Across, carbonated drink
7 Spew out
8 Wedlock-related
9 Unoriginal one
10 Bigfoot's cousin
11 The yoke's on them
16 Accelerator bit
20 Young seal
21 Experts
22 Springlike melody
23 Stannum
27 Spacecraft compartment
29 Cream-coloured horse

- 30 Andy's pal
31 Strip of wood
33 Fettuccine sauce
35 Moo goo gai pan
38 Hearty brew
40 Commandeer
43 Let off the hook?
45 Cudgel
46 Kernels' cores
47 Wrinkly citrus
48 Bobbin
49 Recording
53 Whopper
54 Siesta
55 Type measures

► Yesterday's answer



Sudoku



How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

► Yesterday's answer

2	8	7	6	3	5	4	1	9
6	9	3	1	2	4	7	8	5
4	1	5	9	8	7	2	6	3
3	4	1	5	7	2	6	9	8
7	6	8	4	9	3	1	5	2
5	2	9	8	6	1	3	4	7
9	7	6	3	4	8	5	2	1
1	3	4	2	5	9	8	7	6
8	5	2	7	1	6	9	3	4

Send a KISS

Show some love! Send a note to somebody special at kiss@metronews.ca

Ducky, I can't wait to be your husband. St. Paddy's Day can't come fast enough. I am truly lucky to have such a sexy, amazing, caring woman like you. I am all in.
Love NICK

Jessie, Mamichula. The way you transcend from my dreams to the first thought as i wake up every morning should make the headlines of every paper worldwide. You are the cuddle to my hug, the kiss to my lips and the reflection of my true loves intention.

Te amo. RUBEN - PAPI

My Bella, In you I have found the love of my life. My heart skips a beat when you're near, and I am nothing but thankful for having you to share with. Looking forward to a wonderful future with you. Truly, madly, deeply.
CHRIS

Today's horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 Your mind may be turning to fun and festivities but this is still the ideal time to get on the good side of employers and people in positions of authority. Let them know you work hard.

♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 The old days are over and there is no going back. Once you accept that fact you will find that a whole new world of possibilities opens up to you, a world that has always been there but which you were too blind to see.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 You need help with your money situation and if you don't speak up right away you are unlikely to get it. Confide in those you trust and, most importantly, take their advice.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 Be gentle and generous with friends and family members. No matter how many times in the past you may have fallen out you will get along brilliantly today and over the holiday period.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug. 23 Take life at a more relaxed and enjoyable pace. You've done as much as you can for the time being and now you have every right to cut back on your busy schedule and enjoy the next few days.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24-Sept. 22 You've had more than your share of up and downs in recent weeks but now everything will smooth out again, at least for a while.

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 Home and family matters will be less of a burden than they have been of late. Your problems won't just disappear, of course, but they won't seem quite so important any more.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 If you stay at home by yourself or spend all your time on your work you will reduce your options considerably and miss out on opportunities in the wider world.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Forget about dollars and cents and have a good time. If you can't have fun at this time of year when can you? Your financial situation may not be perfect but neither is it disastrous.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 You may be acutely concerned with your status and reputation but every now and then you go to the other extreme and play the fool, just for laughs. Today will bring out the comedian in you.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 Listen to your inner voice and act on what it tells you, even though a dozen other voices say you should be doing the opposite. Do what your heart says is right and proper.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20 Express your opinions openly and honestly. Some people may be offended but that just shows you are on the right track, that your criticisms have found the target. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Caption contest



"Oh, this is REALLY going to hurt..."
GLENN SMITH

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